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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/440,624	11/16/1999	YUTAKA MAEDA	0879-0244P	3184
7590	06/02/2006		EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH LLP			JONES, HEATHER RAE	
P O BOX 747			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			2621	

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/440,624	MAEDA, YUTAKA
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Heather R. Jones	2621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 May 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1,2 and 16-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,2 and 16-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 16 November 1999 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The affidavit filed on May 9, 2006 under 37 CFR 1.131 is sufficient to overcome the Lee reference (U.S. Patent 6,614,477).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 2, and 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson et al. (U.S. Patent 6,498,623) in view of Date et al. (U.S. Patent 4,918,533).

Regarding claim 1, Anderson et al. discloses an electronic camera, comprising: a display (302) to display a sequence of captured images of an object (col. 8, lines 50-55); an imaging device (224) which captures the sequence of images and outputs image signals for the sequence of images at a rate defined by an imaging cycle (frame rate) of the imaging device (224), the imaging cycle (frame rate) defining a maximum exposure period (exposure time) for the imaging device for the captured sequence of images (col. 7, lines 57-63; col. 8, lines 39-41); a changing device (238) which automatically changes the imaging

cycle (frame rate) of the imaging device (224), thereby changing the maximum exposure period (exposure time) for the imaging device (224) (col. 4, lines 64-67; col. 7, lines 53-63 – the frame rate and the exposure time are related as defined by the equation given in col. 7, lines 57-58, therefore, if one changes then the other one would automatically be affected); an image memory (536) for temporarily storing the image signals sequentially outputted from the imaging device (224), the image signals in the image memory (536) are read out with a predetermined interval and outputted to the display (302) (col. 6, lines 47-65); and a controller (390) which controls the display (302) to display the sequence of images according to the image signals while the imaging device (224) is capturing subsequent images, such that the display (224) shows a live image of the captured sequence of images to enable determination of an image-capturing angle of view (col. 6, lines 60-65 – by showing a live image the user can determine the image-capturing angle of view). However, Anderson et al. fails to disclose that the changing device automatically changes the imaging cycle of the imaging device according to the brightness of the object.

Referring to the Date et al. reference, Date et al. discloses an electronic camera comprising: a detection device, which detects brightness of the object; and a changing device which automatically changes the imaging cycle of the imaging device according to the brightness of the object (col. 7, lines 19-22 – it is inherent that the electronic camera have a detection device to determine the

brightness of the object in order to determine the exposure time according to the brightness of the object).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the electronic camera disclosed by Anderson et al. and changed the exposure time according to the brightness of the object as disclosed by Dale et al. in order to produce an image signal having a proper signal level.

Regarding claim 2, Anderson et al. in view of Dale et al. discloses all the limitations as previously discussed with respect to claim 1 including that the changing device is manually operated to change the cycle of the imaging device (Dale et al.: col. 7, lines 19-22).

Regarding claim 16, Anderson et al. in view of Dale et al. discloses all the limitations as previously discussed with respect to claim 1 as well as further disclosing a signal processor (344) for processing and temporarily storing image signals outputted by the imaging device (224) before outputting to the display (302) (Anderson et al: col. 6, lines 47-65).

Regarding claim 17, Anderson et al. in view of Dale et al. discloses all the limitations as previously discussed with respect to claims 1 and 16 as well as further disclosing a memory card (354) for storing select images outputted by the imaging device (224) (Anderson et al.: col. 5, lines 40-49).

Regarding claim 18, Anderson et al. in view of Dale et al. discloses all the limitations as previously discussed with respect to claim 1 including that the rate

is a video rate (frame rate), and the changing device (238) changes the video rate (348) to enable the imaging device to output brighter images to the display (Anderson et al: col. 7, lines 57-63; col. 8, lines 39-41 – correlating the frame rate with the exposure time will allow the display to output brighter images).

Regarding claim 19, Anderson et al. in view of Dale et al. discloses all the limitations as previously discussed with respect to claim 1, including that the imaging device (224) is a charge coupled device (CCD) that captures the sequence of images (col. 4, lines 61-64).

Regarding claims 20-26, grounds for rejecting claims 1, 2, and 16-19 apply for claims 20-26 in their entirety respectively.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Heather R. Jones whose telephone number is 571-272-7368. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Thurs.: 7:00 am - 4:30 pm, and every other Fri.: 7:00 am - 3:30 pm.

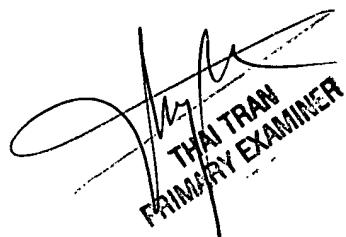
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thai Tran can be reached on 571-272-7382. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Heather R Jones
Examiner
Art Unit 2621

HRJ
May 23, 2006



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "THAI TRAN". Below the signature, the text "PRIMARY EXAMINER" is printed in a slanted, bold font.